

ACT II] BEING EARNEST
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women who are associated with Uncle Jack in
some of his
philanthropic work in London. I don't quite
like women
who are interested in philanthropic work. I
think it is so
forward of them.

Enter Iklerriman.

Merriman. Miss Fairfax.

Enter Gwendolen.

Cecily. [*Advancing to meet her.*] *[Exit Merriman.]* Pray let me
introduce myself
to you. My name is Cecily Gardew.

Gwendolen. Cecily Cardew? [*Moving to her and shaking hands.*]
What a very sweet name! Something tells me
that we are
going to be great friends. I like you already
more than I
can say. My first impressions of people are
never wrong.

Cecily. How nice of you to like me so much after
we have
known each other such a comparatively short
time. Pray
sit down.

Gwendolen. [*Still standing up.*] I may call you Cecily,
may I not?

Cecily. With pleasure!

Gwendolen. And you will always call me Gwendolen,
won't you?

Cecily. If you wish.

Gwendolen. Then that is all quite settled, is it
not?

Cecily. I hope so. [*A pause. They both sit down together.*]

Gwendolen. Perhaps this might be a favourable
opportunity
for my mentioning who I am. My father is Lord
Bracknell.

You have never heard of papa, I suppose?

Cecily. I don't think so.

Gwendolen. Outside the family circle, papa, I am
glad to say,
is entirely unknown. I think that is quite as it
should be.

The home seems to me to be the proper sphere
for the man.

And certainly once a man begins to neglect his
domestic

duties he becomes painfully effeminate, does he
not? And I

don't like that. It makes men so very attractive.

Cecily. mamma, whose views on education are
remarkably strict,
has brought me up to be extremely short-
sighted; it is part
of her system; so do you mind my looking at you
through my
glasses?

Cecily. Oh! not at all, Gwendolen. I am very fond
of being
looked at.

Gwendolen. [*After examining Cecily carefully through a lorgnette.*]
You are here on a short visit, I suppose.